

## The Times-Dispatch

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MONDAY, JANUARY 22, 1912.

## A NEEDED PREVENTIVE POLICY.

There is upon the House calendar, with a favorable committee report, a bill which seeks to establish a home for the feeble-minded on the farm of the State Epileptic Colony, near Lynchburg. This measure should be passed at this session and not done to death by legislative inaction. Its passage will prevent the spending of millions by the State in the future, because it will segregate the feeble-minded and prevent the propagation of an undesirable second generation. The State ought to act for its financial self-protection, if not for other valid and compelling reasons. The feeble-minded eventually become wards of the State, piling up great expenses in every community every year. If they do not become charitable wards they become criminal or insane wards, and still cost the State vast sums of money.

That the proposed institution is needed in Virginia is apparent from the letters which have come from many sections urging that the State segregate and take care of its feeble-minded people. Tonder is a weak-minded child in Amelia, an idiot boy in Rappahannock, a dependent and feeble-minded child in Orange, two weak-minded children from whom the mother feels that she must part, a feeble-minded orphan girl of sixteen, with no home and in constant danger, a boy for whom his grandparents can no longer care. Relief on the menace to society which these creatures, mentally and physically irresponsible. What chance has that girl an orphan, homeless and in constant danger, to avoid being a productive enemy to society? If this home were established she could be taken care of and the evil that she might do to the State averted. Feeble-minded women of child-bearing age would be given preference at the institution proposed, for such women constitute the most defenseless class and that most potential for undesirable effects upon society.

It is said on excellent authority that if this measure is written into law by forestalling the possibility of transmission of weak-mindedness by heredity, insanity would be decreased 25 per cent, and criminality 25 per cent. These figures are the result of careful investigations covering a wide field of research. Professor Davenport, director of the Carnegie Station for Experimental Evolution, believes that, if this class can be prevented from passing on their affliction through children, within thirty years feeble-mindedness would be almost extinct.

It is the urgent and imperative duty of the General Assembly to apply the remedy now, remembering that the sooner this institution is established the sooner will weak-mindedness disappear. As a measure of self-protection, as a measure assisting those who cannot help themselves, the State must have a home for the weak-minded, where the feeble-minded, who are in their thousands, can be checked and prevented. Society has its principles of efficiency which must be obeyed if society would maintain its integrity and strength, and the State of Virginia cannot disregard these principles. Let us not forget the mandate of a higher law, "Comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak."

## FOR PINE CAMP.

A splendid concert will be given on January 25, under the auspices of the Woman's Club of Glinter Park, to help the noble work now being done at Pine Camp. Human nature is so constituted that it gives most willingly and most cheerfully when it receives a consideration for the gift.

Apart from any other reason, a concert in which the great Bingham is going to sing should receive patronage from Richmond. But what to the great merits of the artist is added the cause of Pine Camp and all that that institution stands for in health and social welfare, there should be no doubt as to the size and quality of the audience.

## ECONOMY IN THE FEDERAL SERVICE.

The President's message with reference to the work of his commission on efficiency and economy in the Federal service is a most illuminating and valuable public document. Naturally, the commission has discovered countless opportunities for economy, although its work, according to the President, has just begun. The savings already accomplished by suggested changes in departmental methods is estimated to be greater than the cost of the inquiry up to this time, which is \$136,966. The savings which the commission thus far has shown to be practicable are estimated at \$2,000,000 annually.

The commission has found that often the government pays two persons for doing the work of one man. It has unearthed gross disparities between the costs in different bureaus, divisions and departments for doing the same sort of work. It finds that

some of the bureaus and divisions are duplicating the work of other bureaus and divisions. It concludes that certain services may be done away with completely and the work assigned them handled more efficiently by other services or dispensed with as unnecessary. It finds that the government has been anything but business-like in some of its dealings.

As a typical instance of stupid unbusiness-like methods the distribution of public documents is a case in point. The department publications are manufactured in the Government Printing Office. Each job when completed is delivered to the department ordering it, where 150 copies are wrapped and addressed. Then they go to the post-office to be assorted and prepared for shipment. From there they are hauled to the railroad station, which is only a few steps from the Government Printing Office, where they originated. No less than a quarter of a million dollars, President Taft asserts, is wasted by this unnecessary handling, "to say nothing of the indirect loss due to lack of proper co-ordination."

Another case cited is the showing that the handling of incoming mail costs in one department \$5.81 per thousand, and in another \$84.40 per thousand, while the cost of handling outgoing mail varies from \$5.94 to \$29.53. The government spends \$12,000,000 for the transportation of its employees, but the commission found that, although the largest user of transportation, the government was purchasing railroad tickets on a less favorable basis than would be possible if the subject of traveling expenditures were handled systematically from the point of view of the government as a whole. By test in two departments an average saving of a half a cent per mile was shown to be feasible. Attachment to traveling accounts of an affidavit said to be unnecessary costs \$6,000 a year. Tests of improved methods of copying documents in several government offices resulted in a saving of more than 70 per cent. "This change," in one small cross-section of office practice," writes the President, "will offset the whole cost of inquiry."

An appropriation of \$250,000 is therefore asked for the continuation of the work of the commission. The New Orleans Times-Democrat pertinently says that "some of us will be tempted to suggest that the commission is taking a painfully long time to complete its task, and thereby is exposing itself to a suspicion that it is doing a lot of costly work quite as unnecessary as some of that uncovered by its research of department methods." However, if the commission can effect the saving that the President thinks, it can, the investment will be wise and one which the government can well afford.

## THE FILM AGE.

Motion pictures constitute the most popular indoor amusement to-day. In fact they rank next to the great game of baseball in public favor, and no amusement has made such enormous strides so rapidly as that which centers around the scintillating film. The souvenir postcard is turning behind in its effort to compete with the film. The moving picture enjoys a worldwide popularity. It has secured a strong foothold in Europe, Australia, South Africa, Japan and many other parts of the globe. Reports concerning the moving picture industry, made to the Department of Commerce and Labor by United States consuls in these countries, are most surprising.

A few years ago the moving picture did not exist. Today a vast business has developed both in producing and exhibiting films. London has 251 picture playhouses, and more are being added constantly. There the prices run from 1 cent to 41 cents. Some English films are made very rapidly. For instance the Grand National Steeplechase race was held in Liverpool, 200 miles from London, at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. The race was photographed, the pictures developed on a train, and the pictures shown in London the very evening. Most of the films shown in London were made in America, although French pictures are used to some extent. Colored moving pictures are very popular.

In Scotland the films used are mainly American and French, while in Germany the American film meets with great favor. In Berlin there are 350 film theaters, and one now in progress of construction will seat 1,200. Norway, Russia, Spain and Turkey all boast moving picture shows, and the American film is preferred in these countries. In Japan, Syria, the Straits Settlements and New Zealand the American film has not yet won such general approval. In South Africa the reverse is true. In the Johannesburg consular district there are forty film theaters. This is indeed a "film age," as the Cincinnati Times-Star puts it. Ten years ago there were no moving picture shows. Yet in a decade the moving picture has circled the world.

## MUD TAX MOCKS SCHOOL TAX.

Durham was one of the first counties in North Carolina to start good and permanent road building, and has kept up the work until now by every man's door and by every schoolhouse runs a good highway.

Durham's population is about 25,000, of whom about one half live in the rural districts. Stokes county, which, so far as natural resources are concerned, is described as "having Durham backed of good road in it."

In Durham the schools are splendidly housed and equipped, and the attendance, even in the worst of weather, is spoken of as a wonder. In Stokes

the schools are, for the most part, on a par with the roads, and the attendance comparatively meagre and spasmodic, varying with weather conditions.

One of the principal Stokes school districts has 125 white children of school age, but during the month of December the average attendance was less than thirty, which argues a deplorable drift towards illiteracy, if not a large percentage of illiterates.

The school superintendent of Durham county recently reported, in addition to the gratifying attendance mentioned, that there were only forty-four white illiterates in the entire territory under his superintendency.

In discussing these contrasts, Southern Good Roads argues that they prove that good roads and good schools, and consequently diffusion and advancement of education, are largely interdependent. To our mind, the argument is conclusive.

The mud tax mocks the school tax.

The press has lately been filled with ringing estimates of General Lee, and one of the most eloquent of them was that of the Rev. Plato Durham, of Charlotte, delivered on Lee's Birthday. Here is its peroration:

Once many years ago I stood within the doors of the chancel at Washington and Lee. A dim and holy light filtered through the windows, around which the shadows of the evening were gathering. Through the half light there loomed before me in the apex of the chancel a white marble resting majestically upon its couch. It was the world-famous statue of Lee. To the students of that institution, that to the young men of the South, that silent and majestic image means half as much as it did to me in the twilight of that day, even in his ashes Lee is the mightiest force among us, and his dead, dumb lips speak a message more exalted than the pen of any writer or the tongue of any orator of our better day.

As we have said before, the influence, as well as the fame, of General Lee is immortal.

Postmaster-General Hitchcock may be expected soon to recommend a governmental monopoly of the air for wireless telegraphy purposes.

The congressional investigations are becoming so obnoxious that it may eventually be necessary to investigate the investigators.

The Irish players were treated to stale eggs in Philadelphia. Perhaps fresh ones would have astonished them more.

Governor Foss is being guarded by detectives. That is probably the only presidential prerogative he will ever enjoy.

An army post in Richmond would have a tendency to keep the army better posted.

## The General Assembly and Tax Reform

## III. Equalization Means Decreased Taxation

The tax question will be squarely presented to the General Assembly this week. With the Byrd bill set as a special and confining order of business, the legislative session in lower house will begin the discussion on that day. In the meantime they are carefully studying a measure, which, if passed, would mean a reduction for great complexity.

The Byrd bill is not complex. It is a simple and thoroughly as possible. It aims above all else to equalize assessments. This is the fundamental principle of the measure. It is a simple and thoroughly as possible. It aims above all else to equalize assessments. This is the fundamental principle of the measure. It is a simple and thoroughly as possible. It aims above all else to equalize assessments. This is the fundamental principle of the measure.

It is true that the bill as originally drafted contemplated the assessment of personal property on a single year, but it is now proposed to have it on a continuing basis. The bill itself will offer. This amendment provides that the tax rate will be increased for every dollar of increase in the assessment, and that the aggregate taxes levied under the new law shall not exceed those levied under the old law in some localities.

The increased valuation will probably be proportionately greater than the increase in the tax rate, but it is a considerable fact that the taxes of Virginia will be notably reduced if the bill becomes a law. The friends of progress should remember this and should remember that with the proposed amendment this bill seeks equalization. If it is opposed it will be opposed by those who oppose equalization.

## RAILROAD TAXES.

The Lynchburg News and the Brookline Union, in discussing the tax report, have come to the conclusion that the taxes of the Commonwealth because no increase in railroad taxes is contemplated at this time. It is perfectly proper, says the able editor of the News, to increase the valuation of personal property to its full market value, but it is not proper to increase the tax rate. It is thoroughly improper to do this without increasing the valuation of railroad property.

Let the cold facts be applied to this apparently reasonable argument. In the first place, as has just been pointed out, there is to be no increased taxation. The Byrd bill merely proposes that the personal property of the State be assessed at its full market value. The taxes of the Commonwealth are assessed at a rate of 10 cents on the dollar. The taxes of the Commonwealth are assessed at a rate of 10 cents on the dollar. The taxes of the Commonwealth are assessed at a rate of 10 cents on the dollar.

der the proposed law. If there is discrimination it is certainly in favor of the individual property holder.

The Stock and Bond Tax. A number of individuals and two newspapers have acknowledged standing—the Danville Register and the proposed Fletcher bill, which is to levy a low rate of tax on stocks and bonds and to limit the local tax. This bill has nothing to do with the Byrd bill. It is one of a dozen subsidiary bills which are to be introduced in accordance with the recommendations of the Tax Commission. The Tax Commission is firmly behind this measure and believes it entirely just.

To illustrate its justice, let a case be cited which will appeal to the taxpayer. The case of a Danville widow, whose husband died and left her \$2,000 in trust for her children. Trustees were appointed; the funds were invested in a real estate mortgage by direction of the court. The mortgage paid 6 per cent, or \$120 the year. Yet from this amount—her only income—the Danville widow had to pay the State \$100.00 and the city of Danville \$32.50. In other words, she income in taxes 132.50 per cent, of her total income. Is there any man in Virginia who will defend this tax? This very condition which the Fletcher bill, who introduced it, will seek to remedy. It will provide that the tax be made at least somewhat proportionate to the earning capacity of the property.

But, it will be argued, suppose this is done. There will be a reduction in the income tax, and a consequent decline in the public revenue. To meet this, there must be increases in the tax on personal property and in the tax on intangibles. If a decrease in the tax on intangibles does mean an increase in the tax on real estate, that increase would be justified so long as the present rate remained. The owners of intangibles are certainly discriminated against.

But would there be a decrease in the revenue and would there have to be a consequent increase in the tax on tangible personal property and real estate? The answer is, no. Business men who now evade the tax on stocks and bonds and who would be justified in evading it but for their oath, would pay the tax. Hidden stores of wealth would come out of the tax books, and the increased valuation of intangibles would more than offset the decreased tax. This is no idle dream. Maryland tried it, and in seven years the valuation of intangibles increased from \$6,000,000 to \$12,000,000.

## Capital Is Being Repelled.

Something must be done to end our old policy of driving out intangibles and taxing them at the flat property rate. We are losing capital by it. We are repelling capital by it. We are repelling capital by it.

As an instance of what this may mean to Virginia, the writer met a trustee of a large estate yesterday with whom he discussed the question. The man was no plutocrat, no capitalist; he was a hard-headed, common-sense business man, who managed the estates of his wife and of a former business partner, estates won by honest toil and saved by patient economy. And here is what this business man told him: "I cannot pay Richmond and State taxes unless I invest in non-taxable securities. If I do this, the income of the estates I control is reduced by at least 1-2-4 per cent. Unless relief comes I shall have to move to Washington or to Philadelphia. Virginia is not a place for me. I can get a low rate." Does anyone want to see this man and his hundreds like him driven away? Does the State want to stand at the Maryland boundary and warn away capitalists? Yet she is doing both.

Another feature of the Fletcher bill is mentioned. When it is introduced it will carry with it the exemption from taxation the bonds and any Virginia district, county, town or city which bonds are exempted from by the locality. This exemption will mean that Danville bonds will have to pay no local tax in Richmond, and that the bonds of other cities and municipalities will have to pay no taxes in Danville. This, in turn, means wider markets, home investment, a lower rate of interest on municipal securities. Who would want this in an age where there is much need for economy and little inclination to increase taxes?

It is useless to conceal the fact that the Byrd bill and its subsidiary measures are not a tax-cutting bill. Why there is opposition and whence it comes will be fully explained to the people when the bill is introduced. In the meantime let citizens who are interested in the fundamental truth and who want an answer, equalization means reduced taxes for a majority of the taxpayers of Virginia.

D. S. FREEMAN.

## Voice of the People

The Office-Holders' Trust at Work. To the Editor of The Times-Dispatch:

Sir—I read with interest the editorial in your issue, in regard to the proposed effort of the city treasurers to have the Constitution amended as to allow the city to succeed themselves. I am glad to see your earnest opposition to any such measure.

The power of these treasurers should be broken, and one of the best ways to accomplish this is to perpetuate them in office.

I was in your city the day and night the Democratic caucus was held to nominate the candidate for Auditor of Public Accounts. I was not there as a lobbyist, but on a matter of business, but I was deeply interested in the success of my fellow townsman, Hon. Chas. A. Johnston. What time I could spare I was in consultation with him and his friends. While hopeful of success, they stood in dread of the pernicious influence of the "office-holders' trust." I had doubted that there was any such organization in existence, but when I learned that more than sixty telegrams were sent

to Richmond.

## Abe Martin



Very few authors live happily ever afterwards. The rich man gets his picture in the paper when he dies and the poor man when he's cured.

## A JOKE ON THE OLD GENTLEMAN.

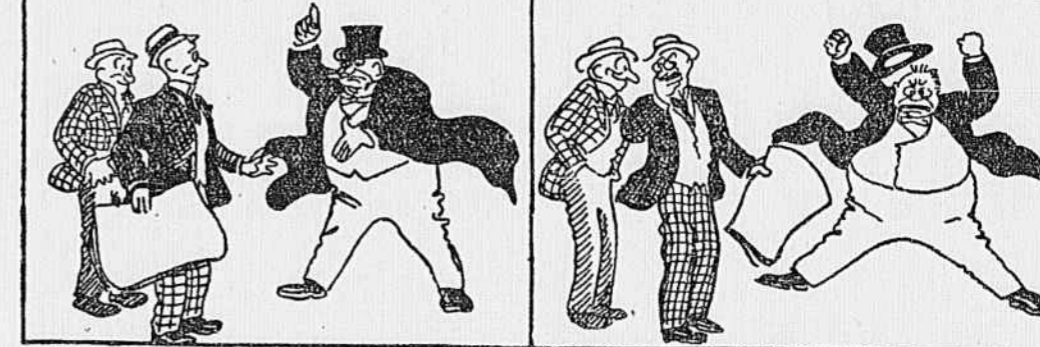
By John T. McCutcheon.

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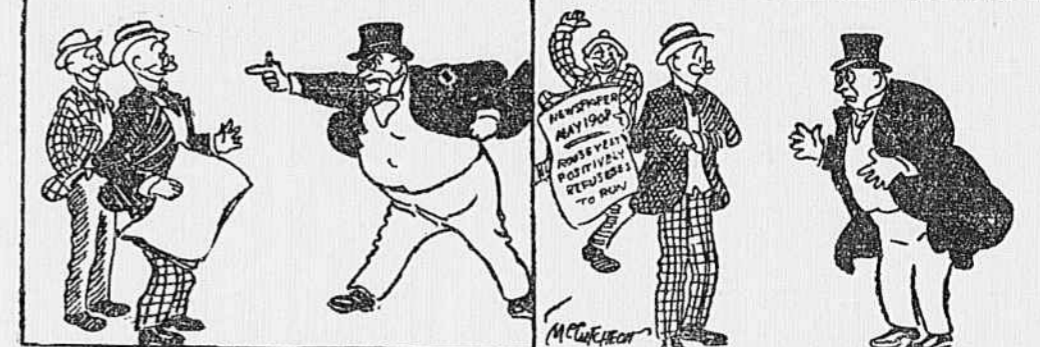
"Uncle has quite a bad case of Teddyphobia. We'll play a little joke on him with this old newspaper."

"By the way, Uncle, I see by this paper that Roosevelt refuses to allow his name to go before the Presidential convention."



"Don't you believe it for a minute! He may say he won't run, but you mark my words—"

"At the last minute he'll decide to accept the nomination in spite of his promise not to run. He can't fool me!"



"Why, I'd bet a million dollars to a cent that he runs!"

"You lose, Uncle. He didn't run."

out of Richmond on Wednesday night, urging treasurers and clerks to rush to the city so as to be on hand the night of the caucus; when I saw a number of these officers, who had responded to the call, when I was informed that there were a large number present who were unknown to me; and when individual instances of their efforts were brought to my attention, all doubts vanished, and there was no longer any doubt before me in all its arrogance and power.

I could mention at least a dozen instances in which they made themselves felt, and should occasion require it will be done. Notably a clerk from the city of Norfolk, whom it is represented had received favors, was most active and effective. The treasurer of the city of Roanoke got in his work well, and yet is of the class who desire to perpetuate themselves in office and power.

This contest should open the eyes of the people and set them thinking. It discloses the fact that the officers of the Commonwealth, who are charged with the collection of its revenues, have exerted their power and influence to dictate who should be the officer with whom they must account, and whose duty it is to call them to book. Is not this alarming? CHRISTIANBURGER.

## Change the Snow Removal Law.

To the Editor of The Times-Dispatch: Sir—Please print the following in your paper for the benefit of those living in the central part of the city who can ill afford to pay a fine for not moving snow from unfrequented streets.

I have cleaned my sidewalk five times, but had to pay \$2 fine for not moving the sleet that could not have been moved without damaging the bricks.

It is no trouble for a policeman to go out Tenth and Eleventh streets and report violations of the law, but had he gone out to Lee District (say Allison Street) he would have been very busy reporting delinquencies. If the policeman had just notified the people they would have cleaned off the snow and he would not have wasted time in reporting that could have been spent looking after real lawbreakers.

Now why not make a move either to abolish the law or allow the city to report cases of violation of the law, so all may suffer the penalty, and not only a few people of the working class?

J. P. B.

## La Marquise de Fontenoy

LORD HYDE, who, with his wife and two younger children, is taking up his residence in Canada, in the province of Ontario with the intention of making his principal home on the property he has purchased near the town of Niagara Falls, spent several years in the New World when her husband, who, dying at sixteenth Earl of Derby, was Governor-General of Canada, under the name of Lord Stanley of Preston. Another aunt of Lord Hyde is the widow Lady Amphil, whose husband, at Lord Odo Russell, was for many years British ambassador in Berlin.

The father of Lord Clarendon played a very important role under Queen Victoria as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and was on terms of particularly close intimacy with Empress Eugenie, his affection for her being always marked, prior and subsequent to her marriage, by a certain amount of national tenderness. This served to give color to the report according to which the late earl was in reality her father, having been as a young man

one of the most devoted and favored admirers of her mother, the wicked old Comtesse de Montijo, whom even Queen Isabella, by no means a saint, could not stand, and considered it necessary to deprive her of the dignities in connection with the royal court of Madrid.

Lieutenant Michael Maxwell-Scott, of the royal navy, whose death is reported from England, was the second son of Mrs. Maxwell-Scott, owner of Abbotsford, and a great-grandfather of the great novelist, Sir Walter Scott. The Hon. Joseph and Mrs. Maxwell-Scott are frequent visitors to America, while there are few American or Canadian tourists visiting Scotland who have not made their pilgrimage to Abbotsford and to Melrose Abbey. In fact, Abbotsford, three miles to the west of Melrose Abbey, is visited each year by an average of from 10,000 to 15,000 strangers, and it is the lack of privacy in connection therewith that led the widowed Marchioness of Bute, who had rented it for a time, to terminate her tenancy.

Sir Walter Scott's daughter married John Lockhart, the historian. They had three children, of whom, Mary Monica Hope-Scott, is the present owner of Abbotsford. In 1874 she married the Hon. Joseph Maxwell, younger brother of the late Lord Herries, of Edinburgh Park, and her husband, after the wedding, took the necessary legal steps to assume the name of Maxwell-Scott, which he now bears. The late Lord Herries was succeeded in his honors, not by his younger brother, but by his eldest daughter, the second and present wife of the Duke of Norfolk.

Mrs. Maxwell-Scott was the object of an unusual act of graciousness on her first presentation at court during the reign of Queen Victoria. The Queen was in the habit of according a kiss to peeresses, and to the daughters of peers on their first presentation. Mrs. Maxwell-Scott could lay claim to no such distinction of birth. But when she was presented at a drawing room at Buckingham Palace by the Duchess of Buccleuch, the Queen, who always professed the Waverley Novels to every other form of romantic literature, kissed her on both cheeks, exclaiming, "Here is all we have left of Sir Walter."

Mrs. Maxwell-Scott bears a considerable resemblance to her celebrated great-grandfather, and the familiar drooping eyes of Sir Walter look out from beneath a wide, full brow, which is so like that of Chaucer's knight of the novel that it might have served as a model. She is herself a gifted writer, has edited the last and best edition of Sir Walter's "Diary," has been a frequent contributor to Harper's and other American magazines, and is the author of "Incidents in Scottish History," "The Making of Abbotsford" and several other popular books.

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